

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration of this patent application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments, and the following remarks.

The amendments to the claims are to cancel rejected claims 3, 6 and 8. Claim 1 was amended to recite that the semiconductor wafer is held with the protective shield. Support for this is found in the present Specification on Page 6 in lines 3 to 4. Newly added claim 10 recites that the protective shield has a pair of guides between which the semiconductor wafer is held.

The Applicants comment upon the prior art rejections of the claims as follows.

Claims 3 and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 as being unpatentable over *Huh et al* in view of *Rose et al* and further in view of *Haq*.

Claim 6 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 as being unpatentable over *Huh* in view of *Rose*, *Haq* further in view of *Guldi*.

Because claims 3, 6 and 8 have now been cancelled, these prior art rejections of the claims have been rendered moot, and have now been overcome.

Claim 1 has been amended, and the present invention is now directed to a process for producing a semiconductor wafer having an edge and a first side and a second side, by etching the semiconductor wafer comprising

flowing an etching medium in a laminar flow along a direction of flow toward the edge of the semiconductor wafer;

placing a protective shield in front of the edge of the semiconductor wafer;

holding the semiconductor wafer with the protective shield;
and

causing the etching medium to flow firstly onto the protective shield and not onto the edge of the semiconductor wafer, and then causing the etching medium to have a laminar flow across the first side and the second side of the wafer.

It is believed that the prior art reference which is closest to the present invention is *EP-637 064 A2*. The Office Action does not refer to this document since it was mentioned for the first time in the IDS which was filed December 12, 2003. Accordingly, a new set of amended claims is provided to overcome all the prior art documents now of record.

EP-637 064 A2 discloses a method for etching a semiconductor wafer. The wafer is held on a chucking plate 74 within a flow channel (Please see Fig. 3). An annular template 78 is attached

concentrically to the periphery of the chucking plate. The etchant flow in the direction of the arrow A is rectified with the template 78 as shown in the upper part of Fig. 6. The result of this is that the disturbance of the flow rate at the outer peripheral edge of the wafer is diminished (Please see EP '064, col.8, lines 38-47). The method is suitable for producing a chemically etched wafer on one side only. (Please see Col. 10, lines 4-6).

The present invention distinguishes over the above-mentioned prior art in that the claimed method provides a semiconductor wafer having both sides of the wafer uniformly etched. In contrast to the above-mentioned reference, the protective shield of the present invention is not only used to prevent the etching medium from flowing directly to the edge of the semiconductor wafer, but is also utilized for holding the semiconductor wafer.

Hence the method disclosed in EP-637 064 A2 does not teach or suggest a chucking plate for holding a wafer which is suitable to produce a wafer having both sides uniformly etched.

In summary, claims 3, 6 and 8 have been cancelled, claim 1 has been amended, and new claim 10 has been added. Thus the present invention, and all the claims, are now believed to be patentable over all the prior art of record.

A prompt notification of allowability is respectfully
requested.

Respectfully submitted,
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